

# **New Hampshire Special Education Program Approval Report**

**SAU 51**

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## **Final Report**

**December 29, 1999**

**Visit Conducted on: November 9-10, 1999**

**Team Members:**

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Nancy Brogden, Chairperson  
Nancy Conway  
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# **New Hampshire Special Education Program Approval Report**

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Students with Disabilities  
  
(Commendations, Citations and Suggestions for each school)

Note: *It should be noted that suggestions are not considered corrective actions and therefore are given as technical assistance. The district is not mandated to implement them.*

# **New Hampshire Special Education Program Approval Report**

## **SAU 51**

### **I. INTRODUCTION:**

A New Hampshire Department of Education Special Education Program Approval visit was conducted at SAU 51 comprised of the following schools: Barnstead Elementary Pre-School Program, Barnstead Elementary School, Pittsfield Elementary School, Pittsfield Middle School and Pittsfield High School, . The visiting team met on November 9-10, 1999 in order to review the status of special education services being provided to eligible students.

Activities related to this evaluation included the close review of all the teaching certifications of special education staff, analysis of SPEDIS data and random inspection of student records. Interviews were held with the Special Education Director, building principals, regular and special education teachers, related service personnel and administrators as time and availability permitted. In addition, the team conducted parent interviews via telephone. Throughout the visit, the team had full cooperation from the school personnel and this helpfulness was greatly appreciated.

The report that you are about to read represents the consensus of all the members of the visiting team. Please keep in mind that this is a "report for exception", meaning that only exceptions to the NH State Standards have been addressed. If a component is not mentioned, that does not mean that the team did not review it; it just means that there were no citations of noncompliance to the Standards found in that particular area.

### **II. STATUS OF PREVIOUS ON-SITE: *Conducted on April 19-20, 1995***

Exceptions to the Standards resulting from the April 19-20, 1995 monitoring visit were satisfactorily addressed and verified by the Department of Education on June 13, 1996. Review of the SAU 51 Corrective Action Plan was conducted by Jane Bergeron, SERESC Consultant on this date and determined to be in compliance.

### **III. ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

The major issue of significance requiring resolution in SAU 51 is the development of a standardized system for the placement of high school students by the Barnstead School District. Currently students apply for acceptance at a number of neighboring high schools and may or may not be enrolled contingent upon availability of space and other local criteria. This past fall the school year began and some students had no school to attend. Other than this issue with secondary student placement, there were no systemic issues of significance in special education observed by the Monitoring Team. Citations to the Standards were determined to be errors of omission or the absence of consistent attention to detail, which of course must be corrected.

#### **IV. COMMENDATIONS, CITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS: SAU-WIDE**

**Name of Program(s) Visited:** All

##### **COMMENDATIONS:**

- The SAU 51 Special Education Team of Tobi Chassie, Anna Williams and Mark Jarvis is commended for its leadership, collaboration and resourcefulness in providing student centered services in all of the schools. The depth of experience and longevity of service represented by the special education building coordinators is a resource of great value to the children and parents of both communities.
- The recognition and acceptance by the staff of differences in children has resulted in a healthy school climate and a learning culture characterized by a willingness to work with the needs of students as individuals rather than as interchangeable parts.
- The extent to which the schools reach out to agencies and other community services/organizations to create a strong link between education and children's lives after school is commended. Recognition of the importance of providing positive experiences during and after school should continue to be supported and encouraged.
- The construction of new facilities at the Pittsfield Middle High School represents a major investment by the community in the present and future of lives its young people. Longstanding issues of overcrowded classrooms and curriculum limitations have been addressed by the project. The Pittsfield School Board is commended for its tenacity of purpose and vision of equal educational opportunities for all students.
- The Barnstead and Pittsfield School Districts are commended for their work to align school curriculum with the New Hampshire Frameworks. Mastery of the skills, competencies and knowledge of the frameworks is designed to provide students with success in school.

##### **CITATIONS:** (in numerical order)

*See Issue of Significance*

##### **SUGGESTIONS:**

None

<b>BARNSTEAD ELEMENTARY PRESCHOOL SCHOOL</b>
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**PROGRAM(S) VISITED:** 1) Preschool Program

**COMMENDATIONS:**

- The Preschool Program has adequate supplies and space.
- The program is located in an age-appropriate space.
- The program is integrated and is a resource for the whole community with non-disabled students attending as role models.

**CITATIONS:** (in numerical order)

Ed. 1107.02(d) 1 file: did not show evidence of written notice of response to original referral.

**SUGGESTIONS:**

None

## BARNSTEAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**PROGRAM(S) VISITED:** 1) Modified Regular

**COMMENDATIONS:**

- There is an excellent working relationship between regular and special education staff.
- The school provides a wonderful climate for students and staff.
- The Special Ed. Director is available, involved and meets weekly with staff to discuss training, review paperwork, and address any concerns.
- Consistent training is made available for special education staff and paraprofessional.
- There are strong technology opportunities for students, The plans to increase technology use by students is commended.
- The extensive participation of students with disabilities on the regular curriculum is commended.

**CITATIONS:** (in numerical order)

Ed. 1109.01(c) 3 files: The extent to which the student will participate in regular ed. class was not evident in the IEP.

Ed. 1109.01(d) 3 files: The expectation of regular class participation was not evident in the IEP.

Ed. 1111.01 3 files: Extended School Year consideration not completed in 60 day or April 30 timeline.

Ed. 1123.05 3 files: No evidence in file that notice of rights/procedural safeguards were given to parents at IEP, re-evaluation or when other notices sent. *The school district reports that there is a process in place for distributing parental rights. The documentation for safeguards are mailed with meeting notices, but copies of several notices were missing in the files reviewed*

300.347(a)(4) 3 files: The extent to which the child will not participate with non-disabled children in regular ed. classes was not contained in the IEP.

**SUGGESTIONS:**

- Revise the record of meeting form for team members to include their title.
- LEA representative should indicate their role on record of meeting.
- Speech/language personnel should attend referral meetings.
- Alternative learning opportunities for at risk students needs to be implemented.
- Hold ESY meetings before April 30.

- Modify existing forms to record notification of parental rights/procedural safeguards.

<b>BARNSTEAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, Continued</b>
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- One parent commented that the transition from early intervention to pre-school was too abrupt. Review transition to preschool plan currently in place.
- Meeting notices should include names and titles of expected attendees.



## **PITTSFIELD ELEMENTARY PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

**PROGRAM(S) VISITED:** 1) Blueberry Express 2) Headstart

**COMMENDATIONS:**

- The staff at the Preschool Program feel supported by school district staff.
- Resources are provided and shared throughout the school district.
- Children with disabilities are receiving services in the least restrictive environment through community settings.
- District provided transportation for parent to evaluation conducted off site.
- The district is supportive of preschool aide training.

**CITATIONS:** (in numerical order)

Ed. 1107.02(b) & (d) 1 filed: did not contain evidence of initial referral or written notice of disposition of referral.

Ed. 1109.01(b) 1 file: IEP goals could be written more specifically, i.e. measurably.

**SUGGESTIONS:**

NONE

<b>PITTSFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</b>
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**PROGRAM(S) VISITED:** 1) Modified Regular 2) Resource Room

**COMMENDATIONS:**

- The entire staff is committed to inclusion and this is apparent in all aspects of the school's programs.
- The special ed. staff is commended for their commitment and implementation of F.A.P.E.
- There is accessibility to regular ed. staff and specialists.
- The special ed. and regular ed. staff are committed to teamwork.
- The enrichment program funded by the district, which includes lessons in signing and different cultures is a good educational opportunity for all students.
- The school is commended for their school-wide discipline program. All students, including special ed. students, have the same expectations for behavior. Common language is used throughout the building.

**CITATIONS:** (in numerical order)

Ed. 1107.03(a) 2 files: LEA representative is not clearly identified on evaluation team.

300.347(a)(4) 2 files: IEP does not contain statement to which child will not participate with non-disabled children in regular classes.

300.347(a)(7)(ii) 2 files: No written statement of how parents will be informed of student progress.

**SUGGESTIONS:**

NONE

## PITTSFIELD MIDDLE HIGH SCHOOL

**PROGRAM(S) VISITED:** 1) Middle School Program 2) High School Program

**COMMENDATIONS:**

- Student records are well organized.
- The Special Education Director provides valuable support and expertise.
- The staff are well informed of student needs and progress.
- There is good communication among all school personnel.
- The small classes and high student to teacher ratio is commended.
- Staff take many steps to eliminate the stigma of “special needs”.
- The special education teachers are committed to the success of the students and provide many options to ensure their success.

**CITATIONS:** (in numerical order)

Ed. 1109.01(b) 1 file: The IEP did not include measurable annual goals.

Ed. 1109.01(c) 1 file: The IEP did not include statement of the extent of participation in regular education classes.

Ed. 1109.01(e) 1 file: IEP did not include vocational component.

Ed. 1109.01(f) 1 file: IEP did not include statement of related services.

Ed. 1109.01(g) 1 file: IEP did not include location or frequency of services.

Ed. 1109.01(i) 1 file: IEP did not include objective criteria for evaluation

Ed. 1109.01(l) 1 file: Transition statement did not focus on student’s course of study. No transition statement specifically prescribed.

Ed. 1109.01(m) 1 file: IEP did not include statement or basis of determination regarding no need for transition services.

Ed. 1109.03(c) 1 file: IEP did not include evidence of student input.

Ed. 1109.04(a) 1 file: No indication regarding transition or that student was invited on IEP meeting notice for student age 14 – 15.

Ed. 1109.11 1 file: did not contain evidence of systematic monitoring of the IEP.

Ed. 1113.03 1 file: did not contain evidence of vocational placement.

<b>PITTSFIELD MIDDLE HIGH SCHOOL, Continued</b>
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Ed. 1115.06 1 file: did not include evidence that Least Restrictive Environment is determined annually and meets the criteria.

300.347 1 file: Reading specialist was not part of IEP process and did not attend IEP meeting.  
1 file: Guidance counselor did not attend IEP meeting or provide input.

300.347(a)(4) 2 files: IEP does not contain statement to which child will not participate with non-disabled children in regular classes.

300.347(a)(7)(ii) 2 files: No written statement of how progress will be measured or how parents will be informed of student progress.

300.523 No process in place to conduct functional behavioral assessments.

**SUGGESTIONS:**

- Develop a segment of the IEP which includes an explanation for reporting student progress.
- Develop a form that describes how student input is obtained if student does not attend meeting.

## OUT-OF-DISTRICT FILES

### **CITATIONS:** (in numerical order)

Ed. 1109.01(a) Present levels of performance not specified.

Ed. 1109.01(b) Measurable goals with benchmarks not provided.

Ed. 1109.01(i) Objective criteria and evaluation procedures not specified.

Ed. 1109.1(j) Individuals or providers responsible for implementing IEP goals and objectives not designated.

Ed. 1109.01(l) Transition plan with requisite components not provided.

Ed. 1109.03(2) Regular education teacher not identified as being present.

Ed. 1109.03(3) Representatives from other agencies not included in development of transition plan.

Ed. 1109.03(d) Steps take to obtain participation of other agencies in transition planning not provided.

Ed. 1109.04(d) Transition plan for student aged 16 or older missing from IEP.

Ed. 1109.11 Tracking of student progress and determination of sufficiency toward reaching goals not described.

Ed. 1111.01 Evidence of the consideration of ESY not included.

Ed. 1113(a-d) Vocational placement not specified.

Ed. 1115.06 Evidence that LRE is determined annual, based on IEP, is as close to the student's home as possible and determined individually for each student not included.

Ed. 1123.05(2) Notification of IEP meetings not found.

300.307(b)(c) Statement of participation in physical education or adaptive physical education not included.

300.347(a)(4) Explanation of extent to which student will not participate with non-disabled peers in regular classes not included.

300.347(a)(5) Statewide or district-wide assessments of student achievement modifications not addressed.

300.347(a)(7)(i) Statement of how progress will be measured and how parents will be informed of progress toward annual goals not included.

### **COMMENT(S):**

- The file review was for placement at Concord High School. The IEP form used was that of the Concord School District which does not meet current requirements.

# **ADDENDUM**

## **JAMES O. MONITORING PROGRAM**

### **SAU 51**

#### **Student File Review**

#### **Case Study Document**

#### **Reimbursement Claim Form**

#### **Case Study Addendum Form**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ADDENDUM</b> <b>JAMES O. MONITORING PROGRAM</b></p>
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**SAU 51**

**NUMBER OF FILES REVIEWED:** 3 Files Reviewed

**COMMENDATIONS:**

- Excellent case management by the Pittsfield Special Education Director.

**CITATIONS:** (in numerical order)

Ed. 1107.07(c) 1 file: Teacher of suspected disability not identified.

Ed. 1107.08(a)(1) 1 file: Classroom teacher not included in LD evaluation team.

Ed. 1109.01(a) 1 file: Present levels of academic performance is not specified.

Ed. 1109.01(c) 1 file: Extent of participation in regular classes is not specified.

Ed. 1109.01(j) 1 file: Individuals or service providers not identified.

Ed. 1109.11(c) 1 file: Extend of participation in regular class not specified.

Ed. 1111.01 1 file: No evidence in file that ESY was considered.

Ed. 1123.03(l) 1 file: No evidence of WPN being sent.

Ed. 1123.05 1 file: No evidence of annual notification of parent's rights.

Ed. 1130.03(a) 1 file: DCYF changed placement without informing school district. As soon as the district became aware of the change, appropriate action was taken.

Ed. 1130.03(e) 1 file: DCYF representative not always present as team member.

300.347 1 file: Participation in physical education no specified.

*The IEPs and forms that were reviewed were documents from another NH school district and were missing several required components. The Pittsfield School District needs to ensure that all students' IEPs meet the requirements of the NH Standards for the Education of Student's with Disability.*